

The British government reaffirm Northern Ireland's statutory guarantee that it will not cease to be part of the U.K. without the consent of a majority of its people; agree that the people of the island of Ireland, North and South separately, should be free, without coercion or violence, to determine whether a united Ireland should be established; and accordingly agree that it is for the people of the island of Ireland alone, on the basis of freely and concurrently given consent, North and South, to exercise their right of self determination to bring about a united Ireland, if that is their wish.

The meeting on the text of the Declaration in London was being done... by the Irish (led not by us) from a Summit, the working meeting with the Irish Government took place in Dublin Castle from 1100 to about 1900 on Friday 1 December. The Prime Minister was accompanied by your Secretary of State and by the Foreign Secretary. The Taoiseach was flanked by the Taoiseach and the Minister of Justice.

We began by discussing whether the initiative to produce a Joint Declaration with the Irish Government would survive it, under the tension of... We ended with questions of eventual success, but with relations with the Irish Government patched up and agreement on a plan for further work.

Q.T.

Northern Ireland was the only subject discussed during the day between the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach. I understand that a few other subjects were covered briefly during the separate session in the morning led by your Secretary of State and the Foreign Secretary.

Neither side pulled punches over recent differences about Northern Ireland. The Prime Minister spent the first half hour with the Taoiseach alone. I mentioned that they had a very frank exchange about grievances and... for example, the Prime Minister took... Perhaps the most... of this was the Irish Times front page article of 1 December. Further clearing of the air took place over the following hour, when Michael Mansfield and I joined the meeting. I enclose a record.

Each was a good humoured social occasion for both delegations.

General discussion of the Joint Declaration exercise began in the... pre-lunch meetings. In the plenary meeting which began at 1900 with the